Utilization of smaller aircraft

Alliance Air has acquired 4 ATR 42-320 aircraft on lease for a period of 5 years for deployment exclusively in the North Eastern Region. Two of the aircraft have already been deployed and the other two will be deployed in a phased manner.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir. There was only one accident so far to Alliance Air aircraft *i.e.* B-737 aircraft VT-EGD was involved in an accident at Patna on 17.7.2000.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Periodical reviews are done on a continuous basis for safety of passengers and aircraft in accordance with the Aircraft Rules and Regulations in force.

Traffic at Tirupati Airport

646. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air Traffic at the Tirupati Airport remains stagnant despite extending the Runway, construction of Modern Terminal Building and making provision for night landing;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to increase Air Traffic at this pilgrimage Airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) The factors of Hyderabad-Tirupati-Hyderabad service for the last six months have been as under:—

(Year 2002-03)	August	September	October	November	December	January
IC943/944	44.7	32.8	35.8	34.1	55.4	41.3

Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taken into account the

need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-East region. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.

Indian Airlines has presently no plans to increase services to/from Tirupati due to low traffic.

Discount scheme on international routes

647. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to a sharp drop in domestic airfares and introduction of low-budget schemes by domestic carriers, there has been a sudden spurt in passenger traffic;

(b) whether foreign airlines from the neighbouring countries and from far-east are offering low fares with holiday packages to lure away Indian tourists at tariffs equal to long-haul domestic segments; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken to prevent Indian tourists from being lured away by foreign airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) With the introduction of APEX Fare Schemes and other value added products by various domestic airlines, there has been an increase of 5.07 lakhs in passenger traffic in the year 2002 as compared to the year 2001.

(b) Some foreign airlines have offered low fares with holiday packages.

(c) Indian Airlines maintain their services competitively by upgrading and adding value to their products and by introduction of promotional fares. Indian Airlines has also introduced "Packaged Tour for Promotion of Domestic Tourism" with effect from 1st March, 2002 and the APEX Fare Scheme has been extended upto 31st March, 2003.